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# RURAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT

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# Newsletter

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## PEOPLE OF WEBSTER COUNTY, W. VA., ARE SUCCEEDING

We must show the world what a free economy can do . . . to put unused capacity to work, spur new productivity and foster higher economic growth. President Kennedy.

A trailer filled with wood products recently left the loading dock of a new wood-working plant in Webster Springs, West Virginia, where 80 local citizens are employed. This event marked the completion of one of several development projects, the result of the rural areas development program of the people of Webster County.

In 1960, Webster County was in an economic decline. Industries were leaving or closing down. Over 4,000 persons had left the county during the 10 previous years because of lack of job opportunities -- young people, county leaders, and teachers seeking better paying jobs elsewhere.

The remaining people decided to act. With help and encouragement from their county extension agent, they met to see what they could do to reverse the county's economic decline and to make it a better place to live. Then they put their plans into action.



Now the county's economic picture is brightening. Three new industries, including the wood-working plant, are employing 310 people.

Two major new recreation areas are catering to tourist camping and picnicking. These were developed with the cooperation of state, local and federal agencies. Several smaller projects have been completed.

And the people of Webster County continue to work hard at bringing new life, new vigor to their area. The planning committee is seeking an expanded wood utilization program, because the county is 95 percent forest land.



Randall G. Bragg, Sr., committee president, in a recent report summed up the plans and aspirations of the local people in their RAD program when he said:

"We have determined that our most valuable assets are our people, coal, timber and natural scenic beauty. We plan to educate our people . . . give them job opportunities and develop our timber and tourist industries."

#### INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP BENEFITS PEOPLE

The American Thread Company several years ago chose Sevier, in the mountains of western North Carolina, for its new finishing mill. It invested more than 9 1/2 million dollars in plant and equipment, providing a great new tax base for rural McDowell County. Today the firm employs 850 people -- many of them part-time farmers -- with an annual payroll of almost \$3 million.

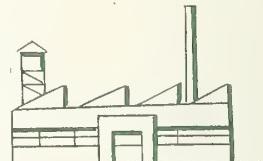
Why did the company pick the then tiny mountain village of Sevier to locate in? It was, a company official said, "because of the exceptional quality and volume of the available water."

The plant uses about two million gallons daily from Armstrong Creek, a stream that flows out of the protected and carefully managed watershed of the nearby Pisgah National Forest, administered by USDA's Forest Service.

How much is the water worth to the community? Who can say? Without that quality and quantity of water, however, there could be no finishing plant at Sevier, nor would there be scores of new homes; and better fed, better dressed, and better educated people. The people of Yancey, Mitchell, McDowell, and Avery Counties would have 850 fewer jobs. There would be less opportunity at home for young people. Wise use of local natural resources proved a sound base for rural areas development.

#### GEORGIA WATERSHED PROJECT BOOSTS INDUSTRY, PROVIDES ADDED JOBS

A small watershed project on Little Tallapoosa River in Haralson and Carroll Counties, Georgia, is building the area's economy as it controls the waters of the river. As a result of the watershed project, two new industries came into the area and added 700 new jobs which were filled by farm and nonfarm people.



The watershed project was the cooperative work of the local people -- farm and town. Carrollton's Mayor C. H. Lumpkin pointed out: "Our watershed projects point up how closely town and farm interests are linked together. We depend on farm drainage areas for our water. We depend on farmers to protect their lands from washing so our reservoirs will not fill up with sediment. At the same time, this treatment benefits them."

"Part-time work for farm families depends on plenty of good water to attract industries. The prosperity which results is of major benefit to all. Conservation and wise use of both land and water will always be the key to progress in this area."

## FHA RECEIVES APPLICATIONS FOR RECREATION, SHIFTS IN LAND USE

Although the program is only a few months old, Farmers Home Administration already has 138 applications for loans to finance on-farm recreation enterprises and other shifts in land use. New York and North Carolina lead all the other States, with 23 and 13 applications, respectively. Proposed projects include plans for hunting preserves, fishing and camping enterprises, public parks and swimming pools.



FHA authorized the first loan to shift land out of current use and into recreation and other enterprises. The loan, \$375,000, will help a group of Colorado ranchers finance development of several thousand acres for both livestock grazing and recreation -- hunting and fishing. Some of the land now produces wheat. It will be converted to grassland.

## WHAT 100 NEW INDUSTRIAL WORKERS MEAN TO A COMMUNITY

The Planning and Industrial Development Board of Alabama recently reported that 100 new industrial workers means these things to a community in the way of development: 338 more people, 117 more households, \$749,000 more personal income per year, \$343,000 more bank deposits, \$457,000 more retail sales per year, and 55 more school children.

## HOW A NEBRASKA COUNTY CHAIRMAN VISUALIZES RAD

Arnold Tuning, chairman of the Valley County RAD committee, Nebraska, visualizes the RAD program as a vehicle "through which communities can make improvements of which they are capable and within their limitations." Tuning, superintendent of schools at Arcadia, observed that "we don't expect to attract a steel mill to our village of 450 persons." Tuning expresses the opinion that tourism might hold some hope in helping stem the exodus of young people from his State.

## DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ENCOURAGES FIELD PERSONNEL TO WORK WITH TAP

In a memorandum to all state employment security agencies, the Department of Labor called attention to the RAD program and to USDA's Technical Action Panels. They urged their personnel to invite the chairman of the TAP to attend discussions of training projects. The memo pointed out: "The chairman(TAP) will be well versed on the economic situation of his area and will be in a position to make broad recommendations as to the agricultural occupations for which workers should be trained." The Labor Department also encouraged state employment personnel to offer their service at RAD committee meetings called to discuss manpower problems. "Many underemployed farmers would probably accept fulltime nonfarm employment and continue to operate a small farm in addition, provided they could be trained to qualify for such work."

## USDA PUBLICATIONS LIST RAD CASE HISTORIES

Three monthly U. S. Department of Agriculture publications feature rural areas development



\* Rural Electrification Administration's "Rural Lines", January 1963, is titled "Special Report: How REA borrowers are helping to revitalize rural America through Rural Areas Development." It contains case histories of projects.

\* Farmer Cooperative Service's "News for Farmer Cooperatives", January 1963, is devoted entirely to "Cooperatives -- a force for rural progress." Using case histories, the articles show how co-ops provide jobs for city and farm people, improve income of farmers, and support rural communities financially.

\* Federal Extension Service's "Review", December 1962, reports on RAD progress through cooperative education; on what motivates people; and how local people coordinate the efforts of many.

Copies of these publications are available from: Editor, Rural Areas Development Newsletter, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

#### ARA YEAR-END REPORT SHOWS PROGRESS IN RURAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT

I The Area Redevelopment Administration, U. S. Department of Commerce, approved 161 financial assistance projects during its first 19 months of operation. When completed these projects will create 26,864 new jobs and more than 18,000 indirect jobs. The last six months of 1962 showed nearly a 150 percent gain in ARA financial assistance activity over the first half of the year.

Of the 161 projects, 77 were reviewed and recommended by the U. S. Department of Agriculture as beneficial to rural areas. These projects will provide 9,972 jobs for rural farm and nonfarm people. The Department of Agriculture has recommended 11 more ARA projects, which could increase rural employment by 1,534 persons.

When ARA started, 582 areas were eligible for assistance; 468 were predominately rural. Today there are 1,008 areas, plus 51 Indian reservations, in 49 States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa. Of these 858 are predominately rural.

#### RECENT ARA APPROVALS COULD AID IN RURAL AREAS GROWTH

I Recent ARA approvals could have marked effect on economies in rural areas. They include:

\* Twenty-five direct new jobs will be generated at a Yazoo, Miss., concrete block manufacturing plant being modernized with the help of a \$35,750 ARA loan. The Yazoo County Industrial Development Company, a nonprofit organization, also will put in \$5,500, and the firm will put up \$13,750 as equity.

\* A \$11,000 research study was approved for Southern Illinois to determine the feasibility of establishing a greenhouse vegetable production industry.

\* Local attempts to boost the rural economy of Marion County, Texas, and to develop the area as a major tourist attraction will be aided under a technical assistance project which ARA has approved.